

STURMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1960



Medical Officer of Health -

NOEL F. PEARSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector -

F. HODSON, M.A.P.H.I., A.M.I.P.H.E.,
M.R.S.H.

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

1st June, 1961.

To The Chairman and Members,
Sturminster Rural District Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report for the year 1960.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935 and 1951.

The report shows that the health of the district remained satisfactory during the year. Although measles was prevalent during the first half of the year, there was no undue incidence of more serious notifiable disease.

The vital statistics compare favourably with those for the Country as a whole.

I am indebted to Mr. Holson for his co-operation and help during the year and for his assistance in preparing this report, and to my clerk Miss J. Shirley for her efficient services during the year.

May I also acknowledge the happy co-operation and assistance I always obtain from your Clerk, Mr. Harris, your Housing Manager, Miss Bradley and all the members of your staff.


Finally, I would like to thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant

Bob J Pearson.

Medical Officer of Health



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STURMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR

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- A. Area - 45,364 acres
 Rateable value: 1st April, 1961 - £79,746
 Production of a penny rate: 1st April, 1960 - £308
 1st April, 1961 - £320

Vital Statistics

Population (Registrar General's Estimate) - 9,770

LIVE BIRTHS

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Comparative Rates</u>	
			(a) Sturminster R.D.C.	(b) England & Wales
Total	67	82	16.4	17.1
Legitimate	67	81		
Illegitimate	Nil	1)		
		Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 15.2		

STILLBIRTHS

Total (Legitimate)	4	1	32.5	19.7
		Rate per 1,000 live & stillbirths = 32.5		

DEATHS

Total	64	78	11.0	11.5
		Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 14.5		

Deaths in
Infants

Under 1 Year	Nil	2	13.4	22.0
Under 1 week (Illegitimate)	Nil	rate per 1,000 live births = 13.4		

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1957</u>
Deaths from Maternal Causes	1	Nil	Nil	Nil
" " Tuberculosis	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
" " Cancer of the Lungs	3	1	3	7
" " Other cancer	12	11	8	6
" " Coronary Disease (Angina)	21	15	17	20
" " Other heart or circulatory disease	74	59	56	71
" " Influenza	Nil	3	1	-
" " Pneumonia	3	2	4	5
" " Motor vehicle accidents	1	2	Nil	2
" " All other accidents	1	4	1	1
" " Suicide	Nil	1	Nil	1
" " Leukaemia & Aleukemia	2	Nil	2	Nil

B. Nature of the District

The district is essentially agricultural in character. Glove making, both in the factory and in the home, is also carried out in many parts of the district. There are two slaughterhouses, where a considerable amount of 'export' meat is produced and a number of saw mills are also in the district.

C. Health Services in the District which are not the responsibility of the District Council

The Hospital Service

Hospital coverage for the district is shared by the Yeatman Hospital at Sherborne, the Dorset County Hospital (both of the West Dorset Hospital Group) together with the Blandford Hospital and the Poole General Hospital (of the Bournemouth and East Dorset Hospital Group) of the Wessex Regional Hospital Board.

Laboratory Services

The Public Health Laboratory Service has once again proved co-operative, helpful and efficient.

General Medical Practitioner, Ophthalmic and Pharmaceutical Services

These are administered locally by the Dorset Executive Committee.

County Council Services

The personal preventive health services are the responsibility of the Dorset County Council, which include the care of mothers and young children, maternity, school health, home nursing, mental health, the ambulance service, care and after care of the blind and handicapped and health education. The following responsibilities call for particular comment.

The Domestic Help Service The appointment of a part time paid local organiser for the North Dorset area has assisted administratively in the organisation of this service.

The Welfare of Aged People Through its well organised scheme (including the co-ordinated services of the health visiting, domestic help, home nursing services and the social welfare officer) the increasing responsibilities in respect to old people are being efficiently carried out. The lack of an adequate number of hospital beds for the chronic and aged sick puts a particular strain on the County Council's services at some times of the year. An efficient scheme is in operation to ensure that, as far as possible the best use is made of the beds available and the available places in the County Councils homes for old people.

The valuable work which the Dorset Branch of the British Red Cross Society does towards the welfare of old people in the district requires acknowledgment. Acting as agent for the County Council, amongst its

other activities, the British Red Cross has established foot clinics throughout the County.

In Sturminster Newton three and in Stalbridge, two, treatment sessions a month are held. Eighty six patients were on the register at the end of the year.

Mention should also be made of the scheme under which the County Council makes financial assistance available to the local housing authority for welfare provisions in connection with houses built for the particular needs of old people.

Problem Families In an attempt to prevent the break up of families both from humane consideration and the resultant financial cost the County Council co-operate closely with the Housing Authority by rent guarantees and other action, as may appear appropriate.

Prophylactic Inoculations Preventive inoculation against disease is the responsibility of the County Council through the school medical, child welfare and medical practitioner services.

During the year the following treatments were carried out. The figures in parenthesis are those for the preceding years.

Poliomyelitis (Six months to thirty nine years)

A poliomyelitis vaccination treatment session was held regularly in Sturminster Newton from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on the first Monday in the month.

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1958</u>
Two treatments	380	(1,057)	(1,205)
Three treatments	735	(1,271)	-
<u>Diphtheria</u>			
Primary treatments	137	(187)	(82)
Booster treatments	95	(188)	(20)
<u>Whooping Cough</u>			
Primary treatments	137	(192)	(78)
Booster treatments	20	(44)	(8)
<u>Tetanus</u>			
Primary treatments	148	(161)	(55)
Booster treatments	35	(13)	(1)
<u>Smallpox</u>			
Primary vaccinations	104	(124)	(56)
Re-vaccinations	17	(16)	(10)
<u>B.C.G. Vaccination against Tuberculosis</u>	-	(58)	-

Sturminster Voluntary/

Sturminster Voluntary Old People's Welfare Committee

Acknowledgment must again be made in regard to the useful work which this Committee does toward the welfare of the old people in the district.

D. Environmental Health Services

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health (Part time) - Noel F. Pearson
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

He also acts as Medical Officer of Health to four other District Councils in the North Dorset Area and as Assistant County Medical Officer to the Dorset County Council.

The time available which he has to devote to his duties with your Council is one half day per week.

Chief Public Health Inspector - F. Hodson, M.A.P.H.I.,
A.M.I.P.H.E., M.R.S.H.

Assistant Public Health Inspector - H.C. Watkin,
M.A.P.H.I.

Both Public Health Inspectors are engaged full time on sanitary duties and meat inspection.

Clerical Staff - Part time clerk and typing assistance from typing pool.

WATER SUPPLY

As from the 1st April the Poole and East Dorset Water Board assume responsibility for the water supplies in the district.

There has been close co-operation between the officers of the Board and your Public Health Officers. Copies of reports of water samples taken by the Board's Officers are sent to my office and similarly, reports of samples taken by your Officers are sent to the Board.

Quantity

There have been no shortages of supplies during the year.

Quality

Weekly samples for bacteriological examination of all the Board's supplies at source were taken by the Board. Your

officers took spot check samples of the mains supplies in the course of distribution.

The condition of the public supplies remained satisfactory.

The Woolland and Stoke Wake private supplies remained satisfactory.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Part of the Sturminster Newton sewerage scheme was completed during the year.

Maintenance of the existing sewerage works throughout the district has remained satisfactory.

Cesspool Emptying

The cesspool emptying service operated under Section 74 of the Public Health Act, 1936, has been valuable during the year and has almost eliminated cesspool nuisances. This cesspool emptier is also used in connection with the maintenance of small sewage disposal works in small adjoining villages and on housing estates, and also operated at the request of adjoining Rural Districts.

This service is to be superceded by emptying of cesspools by contract, early in 1961.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

A twice monthly house refuse collection is now operating throughout the district, with disposal by controlled tipping.

Salvage Scheme Salvage to the value of £390 was collected and disposed of during the year.

RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION

The principal nuisances still complained of will be removed when the remaining sewerage schemes you have determined on, have been completed.

Some pollution of streams and ditches outside sewerage areas is inevitable in a rural area where the clay subsoil makes the drainage of individual house sewage scheme effluents into the ground impossible.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 (Nil figures are not given)

	<u>No. of premises on register</u>	<u>Inspections</u>	<u>Written Notices</u>
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	4	10	6
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	45	36	11
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	18	20	21
Total -	67	66	18

No. of cases in which defects were -

	<u>Found</u>	<u>Remedied</u>
Want of cleanliness	13	12
Ineffective drainage of floors	4	4
Sanitary Conveniences - Unsuitable or defective	1	1
	18	17

No. of outworkers - (Glove making) - 88

CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

No action was called for or taken during the year.

SWIMMING BATHS

There are no swimming baths in the district to which the public have access.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS AND CAMPING SITES

Six moveable dwellings were licensed in the district during the year under the Public Health Act, 1936.

The coming into operation of the Caravan Sites Control and Development Act, 1960 towards the end of the year was welcomed. It is however, principally designed to deal with the larger sites which, so far, do not exist in your district. Where sites for individual caravans are concerned the procedure under the Act appears rather cumbersome to your public health inspectors.

It is regretted that the Act does not lay down a standard of overcrowding for caravans used for permanent occupation in the same way that a standard is laid down in the Housing Act in respect to housing accommodation.

VERMINOUS PREMISES

During the year, the following infestations have been dealt with -

Fleas	-	3
Fly infestations	-	64
Ants	-	2
Cockroaches	-	43

The fly infestations were, in the main, routine treatment of Council house roof spaces.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee of which the Sturminster Rural District Council is one of the six constituent authorities, continued to carry out the provisions of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

The total number of inspections made under the Act in the district was 566 and 472 treatments were carried out.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

There are no premises subject to registration under the above-mentioned Act within the district.

PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

One shop is licensed under the Act. Six inspections were carried out.

The shop concerned is a general store and food shop. During the year psittacosis (parrot disease) affected one bird in stock. Vigorous and successful action was taken (with the full co-operation of the owner) to prevent human infection occurring, from this source.

The premises now registered under the Act for keeping and the sale of pets are separate and distinct from the food shop.

SCHOOLS (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS)

The usual high standard of hygiene has been maintained at school canteens, and there are no particular matters to report relating to school sanitation.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS, 1948 & 1951 - Section 47

No statutory action was required to be taken during the year under these Acts for the compulsory removal of an old person requiring care and attention to an Institution.

HOUSING

No. of houses in the district 3,371

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year -

No. of dwelling houses inspected during the year 377

No. of inspections made 545

No. of informal notices served 10

No. of informal notices complied with 8

No. of statutory notices served 2

No. of statutory notices complied with 1

No. of houses reported under Section 16 of the Housing Act, 1957 1

Action taken by the local authority in respect of such houses -

Demolition Orders made Nil

Undertakings accepted for -

Closure -

Reconditioning -

Other action 1

No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during the year Nil

HOUSING (Continued)

Slum Clearance

It can now be said that for all practical purposes slum clearance requires no further consideration in your district. Less than fifty houses are unfit by the Housing Act standard. Most of these are owner occupied by elderly couples in respect to which it would be purposeless to take action, other than to prevent them, on vacation, being again used in their present state. The remainder are gradually being rendered fit with the help of the available improvement grants.

Nevertheless, the housing waiting list steadily increases, not because of an increasing population, but because people are no longer prepared to continue living in houses which, although not statutorily unfit, lack reasonable sanitary facilities and amenities. The standard improvement grants now available are designed to provide such sanitary facilities and amenities. It is suggested that the time has come when a time limit should be set (be it five years or ten years) after which any house lacking the amenities covered by the standard grants will be recognised statutorily as being unfit for human habitation.

New Housing

Fourteen new houses were built during the year by private enterprise, none by the Council.

The Council is (during 1961) to review its housing programme.

It would appear that unless many more houses to let, other than at present, are going to be made habitable with the help of improvement grants, increasing pressure will be brought on the Council to resume its building programme. To what extent this pressure will be reduced by private enterprise building in the district is doubtful. As far as the housing of old people is concerned there is little prospect of this type of housing being undertaken by private enterprise. Despite the provision already made by you, an increasing demand for this type of accommodation can be anticipated.

Overcrowding

No case of statutory overcrowding was found during the year.

HOUSING (Continued)

Houses Let in Lodgings

No houses are known to be let in lodgings.

Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954

No applications were received during the year for certificates of disrepair under the above-mentioned Act.

Improvement Grants (Housing Act, 1949 and Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954)

Eighteen applications were received during the year in respect to standard and twenty four in respect to discretionary, grants. In addition, standard and discretionary grants were made available in respect to thirty eight Council houses.

Applications in respect to rented houses (apart from agricultural cottages) remain a low proportion.

An analysis of all applications already approved (during the last and previous years) shows that 9% are in respect to farm houses, 19% in respect to farm cottages and 45% in respect to owner occupied houses. Of the rented houses Council houses accounted for more than half. Of the remainder, half are estimated to be of service cottages of one kind or another.

The anomaly of the standard grant in respect to the 'contiguous' W.C. remains and, as at present interpreted, does not appear to achieve the ends intended.

Rehousing

During the year one hundred and thirteen families were rehoused by the Council. At the end of the year there were ninety nine applicants for Council houses, of which eighty five were resident in the district.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

1. Milk

Food & Drugs Act, 1955

No. of 'dealers' subject to registration
by the District Council (until 1.10.60) 22

No. of 'dairies' in the district subject
to registration 3

No. of 'distributors' subject to regis-
tration 12

Samples

Eighty three samples of milk were taken and submitted
for examination during the year.

2. Other Food Premises

The number of food premises in the area, by type of
business:-

Hotels, restaurants, cafes and boarding houses	<u>37</u>
Canteens - School and workplace	<u>5</u>
Confectioners	<u>14</u>
Meat and Fish	<u>12</u>
Grocers	<u>34</u>
Mixed Stores	<u>40</u>
Boarding Schools and other residential institutions	<u>5</u>
Food factories	<u>3</u>
Stalls	<u>7</u>
Other	<u>4</u>

No. of above subject to registration under Section 16 of
the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 in respect of -

Ice cream	<u>49</u>
Sausages & prepared meats	<u>8</u>
Fish & Chips	<u>2</u>

No. of such premises inspected during the year 161
No. of inspections carried out 301

Inspection and Supervision of Food Supplies (Cont).

In this connection it is interesting to note that a manufacturer of sausages who uses his mobile van for this purpose, is not registerable under this Act, although the van, of course, is required to comply with the Food Hygiene regulations. This is an anomaly in the law not yet corrected.

No. of samples of ice cream taken and submitted for
Methylene Blue Test 17

Food Inspection

Slaughterhouses

The two licensed slaughterhouses in the district have been brought up to the standard required by the Slaughterhouses Act, 1958.

The Meat (staining and sterilization) regulations, 1960 introduced during the year went some way to meet difficulties brought to your attention repeatedly in the past. Nevertheless it was disappointing to find that they did not call for all unfit meat leaving a slaughterhouse to be stained (unless sterilized) as is required in respect to meat leaving a knackers yard (all of which is not necessarily 'unfit'). The alternative, has been the introduction of regulations with regard to the use of locked containers, condemned meat rooms and the approving of the arrangements under which the unstained unfit meat is to be sterilized. Such regulations are cumbersome and in practice unreliable and difficult to administer effectively.

The following table summarizes the slaughtering and meat inspection carried out in the district during the year.

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	395	6,078	6,015	126	127
Number Inspected	395	6,070	6,015	126	127
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci:</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	3	50	20	1	4
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	65	3,230	125	1	9
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	17.21%	54.03%	2.41%	1.58%	10.23%
<u>Tuberculosis only:</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	-	7	-	-	2
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	14	-	-	6
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	.34%	-	-	7.34%
<u>Cysticercosis:</u>					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	18	73	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	19	36	-	-	-
Generalised and Totally condemned	3	6	-	-	-

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS (INCLUDING HOUSING) CARRIED OUT.

Total No. of inspections (under all headings)	3,018
Total No. of informal notices served	32
Total No. of informal notices complied with	25
Total No. of statutory notices served	2
Total No. of statutory notices complied with	1
No. of prosecutions	Nil

E. RADIATION HAZARDS

The Radioactive Substances Act came into operation during the year.

No information has been received during the year, under the Act, indicating premises where radioactive material is in use or in respect to authorised arrangements made for the disposal of radioactive waste from such premises.

What information has been made available with regard to the results of monitoring background radiation from nuclear fall out by Central Departments suggests no deterioration in the present position.

F. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Other than Tuberculosis -

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total Cases Notified</u>
Dysentery	14
Measles	337
Erysipelas	3
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Whooping Cough	2
Pneumonia	5

Tuberculosis -

<u>New Cases Notified</u>	
<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory</u>
3	1

Food Poisoning

There were two cases of suspected food poisoning notified during the year.

NOEL F. PEARSON

Medical Officer of Health

